

Weekly Views

September 30, 2011

Thirty-two new Correctional Police Officers were added to the ranks of the Indiana Department of Correction during a graduation ceremony held at the Correctional Training Institute. Various dignitaries, guests, and family members were present to witness the event which included Commissioner Lemmon, members from his Executive Staff, Superintendents and other leaders from the law enforcement community. The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Mr. Michael Lindsay, Deputy Director of the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. The Honorable Judge Bob A. Witham from the Henry County Superior Court performed the swearing-in and oath to the new officers.

During Westville Correctional Facility's (WCC) PREP Weekend Dinner and Orientation session at the Michigan City Clarion Inn, WCC Chaplin Mike Schultz saved the life of a child. Chaplin Schultz heard commotion in the hotel's swimming pool and learned that a young child was in peril. Chaplin Schultz went to the rescue of the child and performed Rescue Breathing until paramedics arrive. Superintendent Levenhagen recognized the valiant Chaplin during the facility's quarterly assembly.

Madison Juvenile Correctional Facility (MJCF) hosted an unveiling of the murals created by MJCF students who participated in The Emanuel Project-Art for Kids. The project is named after Emanuel Martinez, a master painter and sculptor. Emanuel visited MJCF in September where he personally worked with students to create three permanent murals on the walls outside the facility's cafeteria. The Emanuel Project provides art supplies and creative learning opportunities for incarcerated juveniles, engaging them in the classroom, reducing behavioral problems, and improving academic success. In addition to providing art supplies for facilities, the multi-faceted program also provides guidance and assistance from art professionals in developing art projects for the students in the facilities. MJCF is the project's first expansion into Indiana after working with many facilities in southern states.

Fifty Wabash Valley Correctional Facility offenders have graduated from the latest PLUS class. Dr. Stephen Hall was the guest speaker at the graduation ceremony which included proud family and friends of the graduates. Superintendent Dick Brown said the 16-month faith and character based program empowers participants with the needed tools to become more productive and community minded members of society upon release. Wabash was among the three pilot facilities which launched the PLUS program back in 2005. (see photo right)



Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility's (COL) Administrative Staff hosted a dinner for the facility's hard working volunteers. Superintendent Kathy Griffin wanted to give something back to those who give so much of their time to COL. Volunteers from Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and various bible studies were in attendance as well as representatives from the Parole Division, local banking institutions, child support and Work One. Offenders made an oversized thank you card that was on display and gave testimonies of appreciation. Reverend Ray Nelson was recognized as Volunteer of the Year for his efforts teaching Thinking for a Change and organizing softball and basketball games. Over 60 volunteers, community advisory board members, staff and offenders attended.

The Indiana State Prison held a job fair with approximately 45 individuals attending. The applicants were given a tour of the facility, enjoyed refreshments and spoke to staff about the facility. The job fair was very successful and may become an annual event.



Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility staff and four students assisted Gleaners Food Bank by assembling over 7,000 snack bags for distribution to low-income families. (see photo left)

Thirty participants from the Lake County Sheriff's Department, Awakenings Incorporated, the Oregon Department of Correction, Minnesota Correctional Industries, PEN Products and various IDOC facilities completed a three day Offender Workforce Development Regional training conducted by the National Institute of Corrections in Merrillville.

The Pendleton Correctional Facility hosted a blood drive conducted by the Indiana Blood Center. Ten units of blood were donated by staff during the event.